Aloha

The 80¢ Diamond Head Stamp of 1952

THIS SIX FRAME TRADITIONAL EXHIBIT recounts the complete story of the 80¢ Diamond Head stamp of 1952. **The stamp was created for the specific purpose of paying — with a single stamp — the air parcel post rate for shipping one-pound of plants or fresh flowers from Hawaii to the mainland (Zone 8 — over 1,800 miles).**

Although all exemplary usages of the stamp are exhibited, the "heart" of the exhibit features 27 very difficult to obtain solo and multiple usages for the 80¢ air parcel post to Zone 8. The stars of the exhibit are 3 of the 5 known EXACT USE pieces shipping plants or fresh flowers by air parcel post from Hawaii to the mainland. EXACT USE as used in the exhibit, is explained to the viewer at Frame 2 page 7. **An "EXACT USE" piece must be from a COMMERCIAL grower's shipment of plants or flowers from Hawaii to the mainland (Zone 8 >1800 miles).**

CONDITION AND DIFFICULTY TO OBTAIN

The 80¢ Diamond Head stamp is rarely exhibited because the items needed for a traditional exhibit are simply too difficult to obtain.

> ***"Finding the 80¢ Hawaii airmail stamp properly used to pay air parcel post to Zone 8 is one of the most difficult tasks a 20th Century postal collector faces."*** *— Doug Kelsey, Linn's, February 2, 2004*

COMPLETE HISTORY OF "EXACT USE" PIECES

Since 1952 only 5 EXACT USE items have been found and 3 of the 5 are in this exhibit. The first EXACT USE piece was reported April 22, 2002 in Linn's Stamp News. Linn's stated **"The Holy Grail"** of U.S. modern airmail postal history has been found" (see: Frame 3 page 3)

Bob Markowitz, a well known collector/dealer, bought the "Holy Grail" in 2002 from the man who reported the find to Linn's. In 2003 I obtained the "Holy Grail" from Bob.

For over 10 years my "Holy Grail" piece was the only EXACT USE item known. In 2012 two EXACT USE items came on the market - both a unique 2 & a unique 3 pound example - both pieces were from "Crossley's" Honolulu nursery. They were sold directly to collectors without an auction. The only known 2 pound EXACT USE item is now in my exhibit (Frame 3 page 5). The 3 pound "Crowley's" piece is now owned by a collector who will not part with it.

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In August 2018, a 1-pound EXACT USE piece — with a special delivery stamp — appeared on eBay. I bought it. The piece was in very rough condition, and it had the exact same stamps and year of cancel as the "Holy Grail" piece I already exhibited. If I used this newly found "EXACT USE" piece it clearly would have have been "padding" in my exhibit, so I traded it away.

In October 2018, a **SOLO EXACT USE** item appeared on eBay. I was the successful bidder. **This newly acquired item is now one of the 3 stars of this Diamond Head exhibit.(see: Frame 3 pages 1 & 3 & 5)**

TREATMENT AND IDENTIFYING KEY ITEMS

Twenty-one special items in this exhibit are highlighted by maroon boxes. **The 12 items listed below deserve special attention. Together they make this Diamond Head exhibit unique.**

THE THREE STARS OF THIS EXHIBIT

- **SOLO EXACT USE, Only Known — — "The GEM" Fm3 P1**
- **1-POUND EXACT USE, First Found — "The HOLY GRAIL" F3m P3**
- **2-POUND EXACT USE, Only Known — "CROSSLEY'S SHIPMENT"..Fm3 P5**

FRAME 1.....Page

- **Only proof Diamond Head stamp not in the file of Bureau (PF 261456) 3**

FRAME 2

- **Only 3 Diamond Head perfins have been found — all 3 are exhibited.....5**

FRAME 3

- **3 lb. "forwarded free" due to "official orders exception" — only known 4**
- **Santa Claus 4 lb. — with U.S. Customs declaration 8**

FRAME 4

- **Two examples of International Air Parcel Post are exhibited 4**
- **13 oz Bank Securities, Value $19,000 to Zone 8 = $6.02.....7**

FRAME 5

- **Only reported multiple — non air parcel post — Correct Rate 3**
- **3 AO Rate covers: 2 oz. to Australia - 6 oz. to Israel - 16 oz. to Netherlands 5**

FRAME 6

- **Tibet cover — a non-UPU destination requiring a Tibetan stamp 7**
- **Solo Late Usage … Aloha — The End of the Story 8**

RESEARCH AND PHILATELIC KNOWLEDGE

All the traditional sources of research were consulted and utilized. However my research went well beyond the references available. I have been actively collecting the Diamond Head stamp for over 30 years. In 2008, I visited the BEP and examined the Bureau's Diamond Head archives. (Frame 1 page 3)

= Original Research — In this exhibit I identify 14 items as original research - not available from general reference books. 7 of the Original Research items came directly from examining the Bureau's archives in 2008. The remaining 7 are the collective result of collecting the stamp for 30 years. Over the years I obtained knowledge from following all Diamond Head - C46 Ebay purchases - information from dealer and exhibitors. Over the past 20 years I have personally owned or handled hundreds of Diamond Head covers.

THE HUNT FOR A PLATE DEFECT

One of my biggest challenges was documenting the existence of an alleged plate defect that is referenced by French on Page 315 of his plate defect reference book:

"Diagonal scratches in margin above and to L of Plate # 24592 UL."

This ad ran for 6 months in the US Specialist. Finally a collector answered and now for the first time the scratch referenced by French is visually documented. (Frame 1 page 5).

I joined the Perfins and Precancel study groups hoping to locate elusive Diamond Head items and after 4 years I was rewarded with Diamond Head examples of both. (see; Frame 2 page 5 & page 6) I never knew what a "Gutter Snipe" was and now one is included in the exhibit.(Frame 1 page 5)

THE FIRST DAY COVERS

A judge told me my exhibit would be stronger if I included a section of FDCs - I agree; therefore, I now include 3 1/2 pages of FDCs — less than 10% of this 40 page exhibit.

CONCLUSION

The Diamond Head is the only stamp ever **created for a specific commercial air parcel post rate.** On last page of exhibit I conclude that the stamp was at best only a "qualified success". Tying a stamps value to a **specific air parcel post rate** is complicated and ultimately unworkable - it was never tried again." (Frame 5 page 8)

This collection took almost 30 years to come together. I am pleased that I can now share this interesting story with many fellow collectors.

SOURCES:

Loran C. French, *Encyclopedia of Plate Varieties on U.S. Bureau-Printed Postage Stamps, Page 315* (1979).

Sol Glass, *U.S. Postage Stamps 1945-62,* Bureau Issues Association (1954).

Mark Lomonaco, "Airmail Stamp," *U.S. Stamp News* (January, February 1996).

Wawrukiewicz, Anthony S. and Beecher, Henry W. "U.S. International Parcel Post Rates, 1872–1996," Page 216.